

ABSTRACT

A harvester to remove jalapeno peppers or similar chili peppers from the plants on which they grow. More specifically, the invention relates to a self-propelled, mechanical pepper harvester which includes a header at the forward end of the harvester having a plurality of picking units for picking peppers from a plurality of rows of pepper plants. Each of the picking units includes a pair of spaced longitudinally inclined picking bars oriented in opposed relation with opposite ends of the picking bars being connected eccentrically to rotatable disks for movement in an orbital path. The opposed picking bars include facing and opposed picking fingers which move cyclically in an upward and rearward path. The opposed picking fingers include spaced apart tip ends to enable the stem of the pepper plants to pass therebetween while stripping or removing the peppers from the plants. The picking bars, picking fingers and rotatable disks being transversely and downwardly inclined away from a row of pepper plants for discharging picked peppers laterally onto a conveying surface. A conveyor chain with paddles and L-shaped fingers thereon convey picked material to an air separation structure.